

U.S. Land-Grant Universities Active in India

Auburn University

Cornell University

Linked with Tamil Nadu Agricultural University; University of Agricultural Science, Dharwad, Karnataka; Acharya N.G. Ranga Agricultural University, Hyderabad; working with India Council on Agriculture Research

Iowa State University

Linked with University of Agricultural Science, Bangalore

Kansas State University

Michigan State University

Partnered with Maharashtra State Agriculture Marketing Board and Tamil Nadu Agricultural University

North Carolina Agriculture and Technical State University

Ohio State University

Linked with Punjab Agricultural University

Pennsylvania State University

Working with Tamil Nadu Agricultural University

Purdue University

Linked with University of Agricultural Science, Bangalore

Texas A&M University

Tuskegee University

Working with Acharya N.G. Ranga Agricultural University, Hyderabad

Acharya
N.G. Ranga
Agricultural
University,
Hyderabad

Cornell University

KEVIN W. HALL

The U.S. Land-Grant System of Education



Nate France, a science major at Oregon State University, tends his winter squash on a pocket-sized, student-run organic farm on the hills outside Corvallis, Oregon.

Before the mid-1800s, there were no public universities in the United States, only private educational institutions. The cost of going to school at one of these was often too expensive for the average American family. In 1862, President Abraham Lincoln signed into law the Morrill Act, which gave 10,000 acres of federal government land to each state to sell and to use the money to create a public university for agricultural and technical education. Named after Justin S. Morrill, a representative and senator from the state of Vermont who sponsored the legislation, the Morrill Act was intended to provide a broad segment of the American population with practical education that was relevant to their lives.

Just 15 years later the U.S. Congress recognized the need for more intensive research in agriculture development and signed the Hatch Act in 1887. This authorized federal funds for each state to establish an agricultural experiment station associated with its land-grant university. Just a few years later in 1890, the Second Morrill Act was passed, which added historically black universities in the southern United States to the land-grant system. In 1994, the system added the 29 American Indian tribal colleges.

There are now land-grant universities in

all 50 states. In addition to teaching, these universities conduct agriculture-related research and provide education and services to local rural and urban communities. Advisory committees help to determine educational needs and priorities.

A distinctive aspect of the land-grant system is that the universities obtain funding from a diverse group of sources: local county taxes, state funds, and the federal government. They also receive substantial support from businesses, industry and private foundations.

Today, land-grant universities in the United States offer many courses other than agriculture, but their original mission is still distinct compared to other public universities: academic instruction in classrooms; non-formal or continuing education

through extension programs; and research undertaken by experimental stations and other university centers. Many of these universities are now among the most distinguished public research institutions in the United States.

U.S. land-grant universities became actively involved in international work during the past 50 years. They were invited to collaborate with the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) to implement programs overseas.

U.S. land-grant universities assisted India during the Green Revolution in the 1960s and many of the state agricultural universities that were established during that time, such as Punjab Agricultural University, were modeled after the U.S. system. Today, under the Indo-U.S. Agricultural Knowledge Initiative, land-grant universities are actively collaborating with Indian universities.

Continued investment in the land-grant system has greatly contributed to the success of U.S. agriculture. Partnerships between U.S. land-grant universities and Indian institutions have shared valuable science, technology and expertise. As U.S. and Indian cooperation in agriculture continues, such relationships will strengthen and expand.

—D.M.

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